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31 March 1960

NSC BRIEFING NOTE

SUBJECT: NIE 23-60: THE OUTLOOK IN WEST GERMANY

I. In our recent estimate on West Germany -- NIE 23-60 dated 22 March 1960, we concluded that the most likely outlook is for a German state which continues

- a. to be governed by the CDU/CSU beyond 1961 even if Adenauer dies or is disabled before next year's elections -- although the more moderate position being taken by the SPD will probably win it additional support as demonstrated in Sunday's Bavarian elections
- b. to reject extremism and militarism
- c. to enjoy prosperity and economic growth
- d. to seek security within the context of close ties with the US and its other allies, while pressing its own interests more vigorously and seeking a larger and more active role in the western alliance as its economic and military strength increases.

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II. This reasonably optimistic view could be upset by a number of contingencies:

- A. A serious economic recession might discredit moderate domestic policies and cause a growth in ~~the extreme~~ <sup>THE EXTREMES</sup> ~~to right and left,~~
- B. Any serious impairment of Western rights in Berlin or any major unilateral withdrawal of US forces from West Germany would greatly shake German confidence in wisdom of reliance on US and NATO for security.
  - 1. All parties in West Germany are convinced that allied rights in West Berlin and the city's ties with the Fed Rep cannot be reduced or changed in any essential particular without serious consequences.
  - 2. Adenauer and others are already experiencing doubts as to whether US nuclear capabilities will continue to be as effective deterrents to Soviet aggressive action in Europe as heretofore; these doubts have been reinforced by what Adenauer had regarded before his visit as signs of weakening US determination to maintain a strong position in Europe and in Berlin.

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3. Thus, in event of a setback to their interests in Berlin, West Germans would certainly demand additional guarantees and concrete manifestations of support from the West.

4. Fed Rep would probably pose no serious objection to some reduction of US forces after further build up of its own strength if such reductions were justified in the context of overall NATO planning and if remaining US forces were sufficient to make clear continued US commitment to NATO.

III. Particularly because of its misgivings over US and NATO determination, West Germany probably will press its own interests more vigorously.

A. While continuing to emphasize the need for a strong NATO to which the US is firmly bound, it will press to develop its own military production capabilities and those of other European NATO members, and may seek an increase in US missiles in Europe and a voice in their employment.

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1. It may also explore further the subject of a continental military system with its own nuclear capability.

*STATE DEPT, DISSIDENTING FROM USIB MAJORITY, HELD*  
IV. ~~The USIB majority did not go along with State's~~

view that West German misgivings about the will and ability of its allies to protect its interest, coupled with German sensitivity to criticism and continuing Soviet pressure, might lead the Federal Republic to go ahead with unilateral actions which might eventually alienate West Germany from its allies--and that West Germany, thus isolated, might over the longer term be led to adopt a policy of accommodation with the USSR.

- A. We believe that the West Germans would seek to head off real dissension with its allies so long as it continued to depend on the alliance for security.

1. Only if the West Germans became convinced that the US was completely abandoning its European commitments, would we expect some German moves toward neutralism or accommodation with the USSR.

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V. Barring the replacement of de Gaulle by a markedly less friendly government in France, close ties with France will probably remain a key element in German policy--though not to the extent of weakening the overall NATO effort or subordinating Bonn to Paris.

A. However, a successor to Adenauer (especially Erhard) would probably have a less cordial relationship to de Gaulle and would probably be less inclined to push Germany's ties with France and the Common Market at the expense of relations with the UK and the Outer Seven.

VI. West Germany will probably favor the development of multi-lateral Western aid programs, but West German leaders will probably remain cautious about extending their own commitments, emphasizing the limits of their own economic resources and the threat of inflationary pressures.

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